

Matthew 27:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value;

Analysis

Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet—Matthew attributes the prophecy to Jeremiah (Ἰερεμίου), yet the cited text primarily comes from Zechariah 11:12-13, creating one of Scripture's most discussed attribution questions. Ancient solutions include:

1. Jeremiah's prominence gave his name to the prophetic collection
2. an oral tradition from Jeremiah was later written by Zechariah, or
3. Matthew conflates Jeremiah 18:2-12; 32:6-9 (potter's field, land purchase) with Zechariah's thirty silver pieces.

The thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued (τριάκοντα ἀργύρια, τὴν τιμὴν τοῦ τετιμημένου)—The exact fulfillment: Judas's betrayal price matched the prophetic sum for a rejected shepherd.

In Exodus 21:32, thirty shekels was the compensation for a gored slave—Israel priced their Messiah as a dead slave. The Greek tetimēmenou (valued/priced) emphasizes the bitter irony: the Priceless One received slavery's valuation from those who should have treasured Him most.

Historical Context

Matthew wrote to Jewish Christians (AD 60s-80s) who needed to understand how Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy despite apparent contradictions. The attribution puzzle wouldn't have troubled ancient readers familiar with composite quotations and thematic fulfillment. The thirty pieces and potter's field were historical facts the Jerusalem church could verify—Judas's blood money purchased Akeldama (Acts 1:18-19).

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does the 'slave price' valuation of Jesus expose the depth of Israel's (and humanity's) rejection of God's ultimate gift?
2. Does the attribution puzzle strengthen or weaken Matthew's case for Jesus as Messiah? How does this challenge our expectations of biblical prophecy fulfillment?

Interlinear Text

τότε ἐπληρώθη τοῦ ῥηθὲν διὰ Ἰερεμίου τοῦ
Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy that which
G5119 G4137 G3588 G4483 G1223 G2408 G3588

προφήτου λέγοντος Καὶ ἔλαβον τοῦ τριάκοντα
the prophet saying And they took that which the thirty
G4396 G3004 G2532 G2983 G3588 G5144

ἀργύρια τοῦ τιμὴν τοῦ ἐτιμήσαντο ὃν
pieces of silver that which the price that which did value whom
G694 G3588 G5092 G3588 G5091 G3739

ἐτιμήσαντο ἀπὸ υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ
did value they of the children of Israel
G5091 G575 G5207 G2474

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 1:22 (Prophecy): Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,